

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Edwards Lifesciences

#### Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

#### Edwards Lifesciences Improves Efficiency With Lean Manufacturing

**Client Profile:**

Edwards Lifesciences, a California-based manufacturer of catheters, has four locations in Puerto Rico, one of which is in Anasco. The Anasco branch employs 300 people.

**Situation:**

After several Edwards Lifesciences employees attended a lean simulation workshop hosted by Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension, Inc. (PRiMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, they realized that their company could benefit from the transformation process. After company management heard about the advantages of a lean transformation, they asked PRiMEX to help improve processes with an eye toward boosting productivity while reducing scrap inventory and lead time.

**Solution:**

PRiMEX began by leading Edwards Lifesciences staff through a value stream mapping (VSM) exercise, literally "mapping" every step of every process in the company's injection molding area (MOD III). The VSM exercise pointed out that this area currently had seven days of lead time, six days of inventory, and an 84 percent productivity rate.

By studying the map they had created, Edwards Lifesciences employees were able to target inefficiencies in their processes and take steps to address these problems. As employees made changes, the company began to see a marked improvement in the overall performance of the MOD III. Based on this success, Edwards Lifesciences has made plans to implement additional lean techniques in other departments.

**Results:**

Reduced inventory by 85 percent.  
Reduced lead time by 86 percent.  
Improved productivity by 13 percent.

**Testimonial:**

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